

MASTERCLASS GUIDE • OFFICIAL OVERVIEW

IELTS General Training

Comprehensive Breakdown

Complete breakdown of test structure, format, timing, and scoring system for migration and employment success.

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What is IELTS General Training?

Global Management

Jointly managed by the British Council, IDP: IELTS Australia, and Cambridge Assessment English.

Target Audience

Designed specifically for migration, work placement, training, or education below degree level.

Practical Focus

Measures everyday workplace and social English skills rather than complex academic language.

Official Recognition

Officially accepted by IRCC Canada, Australia Home Affairs, UKVI, and global employers worldwide.



Exam Structure Overview

Total test duration is approximately **2 hours 45 minutes**. Listening, Reading, and Writing are completed in a single sitting with no breaks.

Module	Duration	Format & Quantity	Primary Focus
 Listening	~30 Minutes	40 Questions (4 Parts)	Understanding spoken everyday & training English
 Reading	60 Minutes	40 Questions (3 Sections)	Comprehending workplace notices, manuals & articles
 Writing	60 Minutes	2 Tasks (Letter & Essay)	Written communication & logical argumentation
 Speaking	11-14 Minutes	3 Part Interview	Face-to-face conversational fluency & response

 **Note:** Speaking module may be scheduled on the same day or up to 7 days before or after the written papers.

Listening Section Breakdown

🕒 30 MINS

📋 40 QUESTIONS

Part 1: Social Conversation

01

2 speakers discussing everyday practical arrangements (e.g., booking a hotel room, accommodation inquiry, or travel reservation).

Part 2: Everyday Monologue

02

1 speaker providing local context information (e.g., a guided town tour, radio talk, facility orientation, or public announcement).

Part 3: Training Discussion

03

Up to 4 speakers in an educational or workplace training context (e.g., tutor and students discussing a project or group assignment).

Part 4: Academic Lecture

04

1 speaker giving a continuous talk on a general academic or technical subject (tests sustained concentration and detail recognition).

⚠️ **Key Detail:** Audio is played **ONCE ONLY**. Recordings feature native accents (British, Australian, North American, NZ). Module is identical to Academic IELTS.

General Training Reading Section

⌚ 60 MINS

📋 40 QUESTIONS

Section 1: Social Survival

S1

2 to 3 short texts focusing on everyday life in an English-speaking country.

Examples: Advertisements, notices, timetables, and local service flyers.

Section 2: Workplace Survival

S2

2 texts dealing with professional context and work environment.

Examples: Job descriptions, contracts, staff training manuals, health & safety guides.

Section 3: General Reading

S3

1 long, complex text testing general reading comprehension and detailed analysis.

Examples: Newspaper articles, magazine features, or descriptive book excerpts.

⌚ **Crucial Warning:** No extra time is granted to transfer answers. All 40 responses must be written directly on the answer sheet within the 60 minutes.

Writing Section Overview

⌚ 60 MINS

✍️ 2 TASKS

TASK 1 • LETTER

The Letter

Write a response to a real-world everyday situation requesting information or explaining a problem.

- ✓ **Recommended Time:** 20 Minutes
- ✓ **Minimum Length:** 150 Words
- ✓ **Register:** Formal, Semi-Formal, or Informal
- ✓ **Scoring Weight:** Worth 1/3 of total Writing score

Focus: Communication Purpose & Tone Appropriateness

TASK 2 • ESSAY

The Essay

Write a structured discursive essay in response to a point of view, argument, or social problem.

- ✓ **Recommended Time:** 40 Minutes
- ✓ **Minimum Length:** 250 Words
- ✓ **Register:** Formal Academic / Semi-Formal
- ✓ **Scoring Weight:** Carries DOUBLE the weight of Task 1

Focus: Logical Argumentation, Evidence & Structure

Writing Task 1: Tone & Structure

Letter Register & Tone

Formal

Tone: Unknown recipient or official organization (e.g., company manager, local authority, airline customer support).

Semi-Formal Tone:

Known recipient in professional/formal relationship (e.g., landlord, workplace colleague, professor).

Informal

Tone: Personal friend or family member (casual language and colloquial expressions permitted).

5-Step Letter Structure

1. **Salutation:** Dear Sir/Madam (Formal) OR Dear Mr. Smith (Semi-Formal) OR Dear John (Informal)
2. **Opening Statement:** Clear statement of purpose explaining why you are writing the letter.
3. **Body Paragraphs:** Sequentially cover all 3 bullet points provided in the prompt.
4. **Closing:** some sort of closing, telling them about a swift response or something similar.
5. **Sign-off:** Yours faithfully / Yours sincerely / Warm regards + Full Name.

Writing Task 2: The Essay

Common Essay Types

- ✓ **Opinion Essay:** To what extent do you agree or disagree?
- ✓ **Discussion Essay:** Discuss both views and give your opinion.
- ✓ **Advantages & Disadvantages:** Do advantages outweigh disadvantages?
- ✓ **Problem & Solution:** What causes this issue and what are the solutions?

 **The Golden Rule:** Directly address every part of the prompt with clear central topic sentences, extended explanations, and relevant real-world examples.

Speaking Section Overview

🕒 11-14 MINS

👤 FACE-TO-FACE

📌 Format & Features

- ✓ **Human Examiner:** 1-on-1 interactive interview with a certified human examiner.
- ✓ **Audio Recorded:** Session is recorded for quality control and official re-marking requests.
- ✓ **Standardized:** Identical structure, timing, and scoring criteria to Academic IELTS.
- ✓ **Flexible Scheduling:** Scheduled on exam day or within 7 days before or after.

💬 Common Sample Topics

💬 Work, career ambitions & daily routine

💬 Hometown, accommodation & local area

💬 Free time activities, hobbies & technology

💬 Overcoming personal or workplace challenges

Speaking Parts 1, 2 & 3 in Detail

4 - 5 MINS

P1

Part 1: Introduction

General questions on familiar personal topics (e.g., home, family, job, studies, hobbies, daily habits).

3 - 4 MINS

P2

Part 2: Long Turn

1 minute prep with cue card prompt, followed by 2 minutes uninterrupted speaking, plus 1 follow-up question.

4 - 5 MINS

P3

Part 3: Discussion

Abstract, analytical discussion expanding on Part 2 themes. Tests hypothesis, evaluation, and argumentation.

★ **Pro Strategy for Part 1 & 3 (AREL Framework):** Answer directly, give logical Reason, provide a concrete Example and Loop Back to finish.

IELTS Scoring System

📝 BAND SCALE 0 - 9

Band 9

EXPERT USER

Band 8

VERY GOOD USER

Band 7

GOOD USER

Band 6

COMPETENT USER

📊 Overall Band Score Calculation Rule

The overall band score is calculated as the average of all 4 sub-scores (Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking), rounded to the nearest half or whole band.

Listening: 6.5 + Reading: 6.5 + Writing: 6.0 + Speaking: 7.0 = **6.5 Overall Band**

Evaluation Criteria (25% Weight Each)

OFFICIAL RUBRIC

Writing Criteria

1. **Task Achievement / Response:** Fully addressing all prompt requirements with relevant position.
2. **Coherence & Cohesion:** Clear paragraph arrangement, logical progression, and linkers.
3. **Lexical Resource:** Range of vocabulary, collocations, precision, and spelling accuracy.
4. **Grammatical Range & Accuracy:** Variety of complex structures and accurate punctuation.

Speaking Criteria

1. **Fluency & Coherence:** Flow of speech, length of answer, logical sequence without self-correction.
2. **Lexical Resource:** Vocabulary range, natural idiom usage, and paraphrase capability.
3. **Grammatical Range & Accuracy:** Sentence structure variety and grammatical precision.
4. **Pronunciation:** Intonation, rhythm, clarity of individual sounds, and stress.

Canadian CLB & Immigration Benchmarks

CLB Level	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Pathways & Impact
CLB 9	Band 8.0	Band 7.0	Band 7.0	Band 7.0	Max Express Entry CRS Points
CLB 8	Band 7.5	Band 6.5	Band 6.5	Band 6.5	Competitive Express Entry Candidate
CLB 7	Band 6.0	Band 6.0	Band 6.0	Band 6.0	Minimum Requirement for FSWP / CEC NOC 0/1
CLB 5	Band 5.0	Band 4.0	Band 5.0	Band 5.0	Trades & Provincial Nominee Pathways

 **Express Entry Insight:** Reaching **CLB 9 (8-7-7-7)** unlocks significant skill transferability bonus points under Canada's CRS score system.

Common Pitfalls vs Master Strategies

✖ Top Mistakes to Avoid

- ✓ **Misjudging Task Register:** Mixing formal and informal language in Task 1 letters.
- ✓ **Misallocating Writing Time:** Spending too much time drafting Task 1 and leaving under 35 mins for Task 2.
- ✓ **Rote Memorization:** Memorizing canned responses for Speaking parts.
- ✓ **Reading Transfer Errors:** Forgetting to write Reading responses directly on answer sheet.

✔ Recommended Master Steps

- ✓ **Timed Practice:** Train under strict realistic exam time pressure.
- ✓ **Daily Immersion:** Read workplace guidelines, notices, and newspaper opinion columns daily.
- ✓ **Expert Feedback:** Work with certified tutors to identify criteria capping your band score.
- ✓ **Pacing Mastery:** Master time allocation across all 4 modules.

14. NEXT STEPS

Ready for Band 8+ Success?

Thank you for reviewing the IELTS General Training Overview. Access comprehensive practice tests, essay evaluation, and strategic coaching online.

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Image Sources



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